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ABSTRACT

This data book for 1996 describes the condition of children in each of Mississippi's 82 counties, based on key indicators of child well-being. The first part of the report profiles child hunger in Mississippi, and discusses nutrition programs available to Mississippi's children, such as: the special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children(WIC); the National School Lunch Program; the School Breakfast Program; the Summer Food Service Program; the Food Stamp Program; and finally the Child and Adult Care Food Program The data book then provides county specific trend data on nine indicators of child well-being: (1) low birth-weight; (2) infant mortality; (3) births to single teens; (4) single-parent families and working poor families; (5) child deaths; (6) teen deaths; (7) high school graduation; (8) teen unemployment; and (9) juvenile incarceration rate. Each indicator is described and analyzed. Demographic information and statistics for the State data and the top 10 counties are presented for each indicator. Tables with comparative data for previous years from selected counties are included, as well as suggestions on what can be done to reduce childhood hunger and undernutrition. (AA)

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Deepest Spring in the Heart

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KIDS COUNT Mississippi 1996 Data Book

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Volume III

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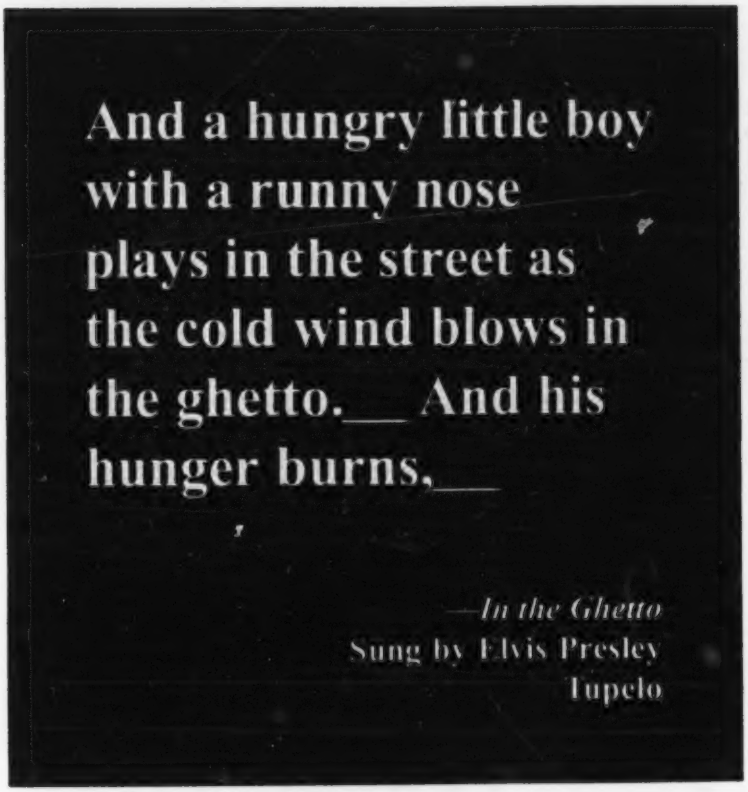

In the Ghetto
(The Vicious Circle)
Words and Music by Mac Davis
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Elvis Presley as a 12 year old student at Milam Junior High in Tupelo.

Mississippi's Child Hunger Profile

266,000 or 34.3% of all children are hungry (National average—18.3%), 1991

273,355 or 103% of hungry children receive Food Stamps (National average—118%), Fiscal Year 1993

34,633 or 13% of hungry children are served by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (National average—17%), Fiscal Year 1993

103,506 WIC participants: 20,757 women, 30,150 infants, 52,619 children, Fiscal Year 1994*

283,572 children receive free/reduced price school lunches through the School Lunch Program, School Year 1994-95

145,040 or 51% of children eligible for free/reduced price lunches particpate in the School Breakfast Program, School Year 1994-95 (National Average—39.2%)

34,270 or 12.1% of children eligible for free/reduced lunch program participate in the Summer Food Service Program, Summer 1995

Compiled by the Tufts University Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy from Center on Hunger, Children's Defense Fund and Food Research and Action Center information from USDA data.
*Supplied by WIC Office, Mississippi State Department of Health

Like family, Mississippi music rises from the **"deepest spring in the heart."** From the time they are small children, Mississippians are exposed to a culture steeped in music. Religious, school and community events typically feature food, fun and music—from second grade songsters to marching bands. Though "all day singings with dinner on the grounds" are no longer regular Sunday events, the association of harmony and hunger is still very much a part of life.

Mississippi's homegrown music royalty have written and sung often about life. They've sung arias, strummed, yodeled and been "all shook up." They've sung the blues.

The blues, the state's contribution to American music, were adapted from work songs of the Delta into laments about life. Since music is a natural outlet for the expression of feelings, the blues reflect powerful, yet everyday, emotions. For many children in modern day Mississippi, singing the blues would reveal their regular and constant hunger.

Childhood Hunger

One of every three Mississippi children is hungry. But don't expect to see the starving waifs of posters illustrating the hunger of third world nations. Think instead of undernourishment and the risk to their education and future.

Some undernourished children go to child care and school without breakfast. If their school doesn't have a breakfast program, it's lunchtime before they eat. It's hard to learn on an empty stomach.

Others eat according to payday, eating adequately after hard working parents receive meager wages, then getting by on noodles or crackers when the family budget is strained. These children live across town and right next door. All undernourished children, no matter where they live, are at risk of not growing to their full potential.

Undernutrition and School Success

Growing children need regular, wholesome food. Neither constant hunger nor feast and famine eating can provide children with important nutrients needed for growth.

An initiative of the Tufts University School of Nutrition has focused on this important link between nutrition and cognitive development. Tufts' research through their Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition has shown undernutrition affects children's behavior, their performance in school and their cognitive development.

The bodies of undernourished children work efficiently.

Critical organ functions get the first benefits of energy from food. Leftover energy is available for growth, with any excess food energy being used for cognitive development.

Undernourished children have problems concentrating, a critical impairment for children in school. Undernourished children are less active and less aware of and interested in the world around them. Social interaction with healthy children is a trial for undernourished children, making it difficult for them to "fit in."

Undernourishment can be the underlying cause for anemia, headaches, fatigue and chronic illness and can lead to frequent school absences. Hungry children also are at greater risk of lead poisoning.

Children can, in fact, be affected by undernourishment even before birth. If their mother doesn't eat well during pregnancy, as is often the case with teen mothers, then babies can be born with low birth weights and subsequent developmental delays.

Studies show undernutrition at any time during childhood can have lasting effects—effects that last into adulthood through lost opportunities. Chronically undernourished children with cognitive limitations and behavioral impairments often become adults with less than adequate educational experiences and less than adequate capacity for productivity. This diminished potential translates, in turn, into adults' lifelong abilities to provide adequate financial support for the well-being of their families.

Undernutrition and Poverty

Not all of Mississippi's hungry and undernourished children are poor. Many are from financially fragile families that have a harder time weathering the storms of everyday life. These families, whether headed by a single parent or by two low-wage-earner parents, don't decide not to feed their children. Unexpected doctor bills, rising costs for everyday expenses and job layoffs can quickly whisk away grocery moneys.

The solutions to the alarming problem of childhood undernutrition lie in improving the ability of families to provide regular nutritious meals. Well-paying jobs, affordable health care and the availability of child care can go a long way toward easing undernutrition—and improving school performance and securing better futures. Until all these solutions are within every Mississippian's reach, hungry children must rely on nutrition programs.

Percent of Population Receiving AFDC

Percentage of Population Receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children, June 1995

1 - 4 9% 5 - 9 9% 10+%

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Percent of Students Eligible for Free Lunch Program

Percentage of Public School Students Eligible for the Free/Reduced School Program, October 1995

(Average Used for Counties with Multiple Districts)

22 - 39.9% 40 - 59.9% 60+%

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Nutrition Programs

Food is one of the basic needs of life. Over the course of 50 years, a network of nutrition programs has been developed to combat hunger. These programs ensure that families have food when it is needed and children can grow and reach their educational potential.

WIC

The Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provides a nutritional food source for eligible pregnant women and new mothers, their babies and children under 5. Studies show WIC has prevented extra health care costs for participants and reduced anemia in school-age children.

In fiscal year 1994, there were 103,526 WIC program participants in Mississippi—20,757 women, 30,150 babies and 52,619 children. This is 70 percent of the participants determined potentially eligible to receive food supplements according to income and nutritional risk.

School Lunch Program

The National School Lunch Program provides free or reduced price lunches to school children depending on household income. Research shows children participating in the lunch program can receive as much as half of their daily nutritional intake at lunch.

More than half—54.8 percent—of Mississippi's public school students were eligible for free and reduced cost lunches during the 1995-1996 school year. Almost all the students in Jefferson County schools—97.2 percent—were eligible for the program, while less than one in four—22.3 percent—of DeSoto County's children can participate. All public school districts in the state participate in this program.

School Breakfast

The School Breakfast Program allows participating schools and child care centers to provide breakfast at free or reduced rates, depending on family income—if the program is available. Studies show children eating breakfast on the program have higher standardized test scores.

Less than half of the nation's schools offer the program, but most Mississippi schools do. In the 1994-95 school year, slightly more than half of the children eligible for free lunches participated in the breakfast program.

Summer Food Service Program

The Summer Food Service Program allows sponsoring organizations—schools or community organizations—to serve nutritious meals during summer months to low-income children when school breakfasts and lunches are not served.

Last summer, 57 of the state's 82 counties had summer food sites. The 265 sites in these counties were operated by 87 sponsors. A total of 318,455 children were eligible for the summer food program. The total average daily participation was 51,973 children.

Food Stamp Program

The Food Stamp Program is the most widely used anti-hunger program. Through this program, low-income families are able to buy food to improve their diets.

In fiscal year 1995, a total of 477,566 Mississippians in 184,046 households participated in the Food Stamp Program. The value of food stamp coupons totalled $385,341,135. Nationally, half of all food stamp participants are children and almost 90 percent are women, children and the elderly.

Child and Adult Care Food Program

Child care centers and family child care homes participating in this program are reimbursed for providing nutritious meals and snacks to the children and elderly in their care.

Only 13 percent of the state's children participate in this program administered by the Mississippi Department of Education through local sponsors.

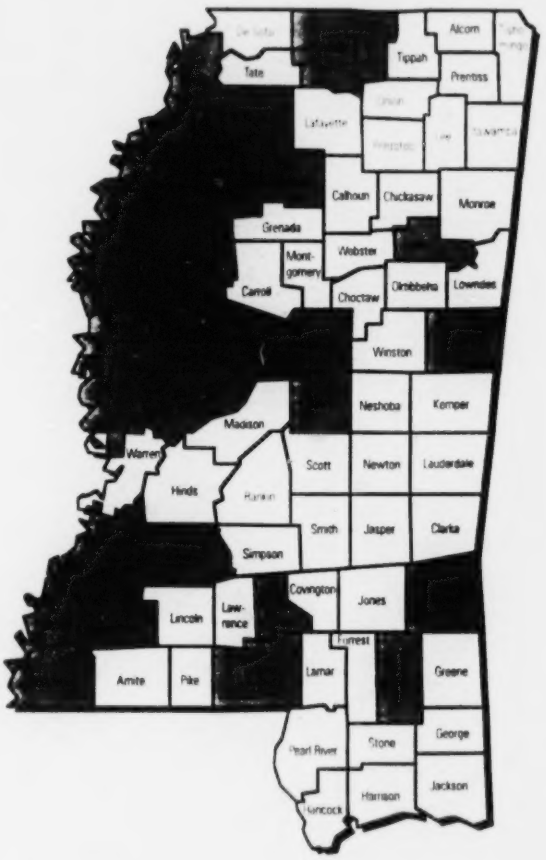
This Data Book

The 1994 and 1995 Mississippi data books used the WIC annual average participation and the percentage of students eligible for free lunch as county-level indicators of poverty. The 1995 book used percentage of population receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children and annual average unemployment rate as economic measures more recent than the previously used 1990 Census data.

These trend measures along with the percentage of population receiving food stamps have been moved to separate tables following this section on nutrition and cognitive development. A careful examination of the tables and accompanying charts provide a valuable snapshot of the location of and causes of hunger and undernourishment of Mississippi's children.

Percent of Population Receiving Food Stamps

Percentage of Population Receiving Food Stamps, June 1995



6 - 9.9% 10 - 19.9% 20+%

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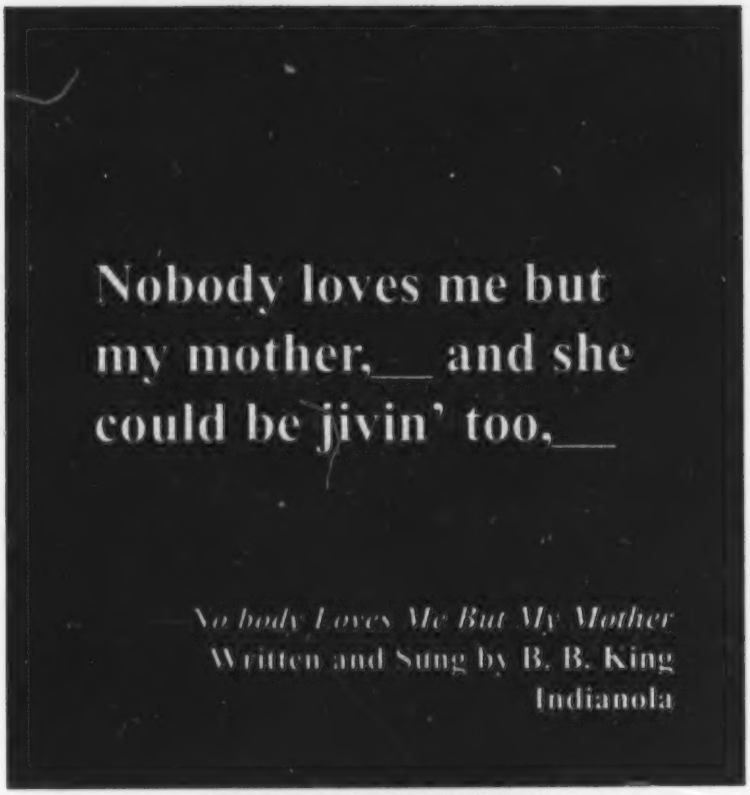
Selected Nutrition Program and Income Data

	WIC Annual Average Participation as % of Potential Eligible		% CHANGE	Percent Students Eligible for Free Lunch		% CHANGE	Percent Population Receiving Food Stamps		% CHANGE	Percent of Population Receiving AFDC		% CHANGE	Annual Average Unemployment Rate		% CHANGE
	10/95-6/96	10/92-9/93		1995	1991		June 1995	June 1991		June 1995	June 1988		1995	1985	
Mississippi	70.0	75.2	-7	54.8	60.4	-9	17.9	20.7	-14	5.3	6.8	-22	6.1	10.3	-41
Adams	70.0	84.2	-17	71.2	67.7	5	24.7	26.1	-5	9.1	9.6	-5	7.3	13.1	-44
Alcorn	70.0	76.9	-9	34.9	34.6	1	12.2	16.4	-26	2.5	3.0	-17	8.4	17.0	-51
Amite	41.0	57.1	-28	81.2	78.6	3	19.6	20.5	-4	5.3	6.3	-16	5.2	10.8	-52
Attala	90.0	95.7	-6	62.7	64.2	-2	20.9	23.2	-10	3.9	5.5	-29	7.5	15.6	-52
Benton	62.0	84.5	-27	74.6	76.1	-2	20.3	29.6	-31	3.9	7.4	-47	9.8	13.1	-25
Bolivar	72.0	76.0	-5	84.9	84.3	1	30.5	36.6	-17	11.4	16.8	-32	8.7	12.1	-28
Calhoun	75.0	72.4	4	53.5	52.8	1	15.8	18.5	-15	3.0	3.9	-23	4.4	11.6	-62
Carroll	43.0	44.8	-4	78.8	79.2	-1	16.5	21.5	-23	4.5	5.7	-21	5.5	7.8	-29
Chickasaw	105.0	106.9	-2	60.2	55.2	9	14.4	17.5	-18	2.7	2.9	-7	10.7	11.2	-4
Choctaw	79.0	58.0	36	57.8	56.2	3	19.4	23.8	-18	4.4	5.8	-24	9.5	13.2	-28
Claiborne	79.0	86.9	-9	86.2	88.4	-2	26.0	32.4	-20	8.8	12.6	-30	9.8	13.5	-27
Clarke	70.0	81.4	-14	48.8	53.6	-9	11.9	16.7	-29	3.1	4.7	-34	5.3	10.8	-51
Clay	67.0	81.8	-18	77.5	72.4	7	22.9	24.8	-8	7.9	7.9	0	10.3	11.1	-7
Coahoma	63.0	65.5	-4	85.2	84.3	1	35.6	38.9	-8	14.0	18.3	-23	10.3	14.4	-28
Copiah	65.0	79.4	-18	73.5	74.8	-2	25.0	26.5	-6	7.0	8.2	-15	7.2	11.1	-35
Covington	69.0	82.4	-16	57.8	57.1	1	18.0	24.6	-27	3.1	7.4	-58	5.0	12.2	-59
DeSoto	66.0	82.6	-20	22.3	24.3	-8	6.3	8.5	-26	1.2	2.7	-56	4.3	6.4	-33
Forrest	60.0	72.8	-18	47.4	48.3	-2	15.6	18.1	-14	5.0	6.5	-23	4.4	9.1	-52
Franklin	67.0	104.6	-36	59.3	55.7	6	20.4	26.0	-22	6.3	8.5	-26	6.5	12.7	-49
George	56.0	70.1	-20	40.2	37.2	8	16.8	19.6	-14	3.6	4.0	-10	9.7	19.0	-49
Greene	78.0	60.2	30	57.6	56.3	2	19.4	25.7	-25	4.9	7.6	-36	9.0	20.3	-56
Grenada	77.0	103.6	-26	51.1	51.6	-1	17.6	22.0	-20	4.6	7.1	-35	6.9	13.1	-47
Hancock	70.0	88.3	-21	53.9	53.3	1	15.0	19.3	-22	3.0	3.7	-19	6.7	7.7	-13
Harrison	59.0	64.1	-8	42.6	43.7	-3	13.2	14.6	-10	3.8	4.0	-5	6.3	8.3	-24
Hinds	59.0	68.2	-14	56.3	56.9	-1	18.7	18.7	0	6.8	7.5	-9	4.3	7.0	-39
Holmes	74.0	84.5	-12	87.8	85.6	3	49.5	53.7	-8	17.7	21.8	-19	12.1	15.9	-24
Humphreys	65.0	77.3	-16	92.8	90.3	3	34.8	35.2	-1	13.8	13.2	5	12.1	13.0	-7
Issaquena	**	**	**	**	**	**	35.5	42.1	-16	10.8	11.0	-2	15.4	8.4	83
Itawamba	109.0	84.8	28	27.6	31.1	-11	6.6	7.9	-16	1.0	1.1	-9	4.9	9.6	-49
Jackson	48.0	53.3	-10	33.0	32.2	2	11.4	13.3	-14	3.8	4.4	-14	5.9	10.9	-46
Jasper	94.0	93.0	1	73.5	73.5	0	16.2	21.7	-25	3.3	6.0	-45	6.4	14.0	-54
Jefferson	89.0	113.8	-22	97.2	93.7	4	34.9	42.5	-18	11.6	16.4	-29	15.5	19.8	-22
Jeff Davis	69.0	84.4	-18	83.7	79.5	5	29.8	32.2	-7	6.4	8.1	-21	12.8	12.7	1
Jones	69.0	78.4	-12	56.5	57.6	-2	13.7	16.4	-16	3.9	4.6	-15	4.0	9.1	-56
Kemper	83.0	82.0	1	80.0	77.4	3	18.7	20.8	-10	4.0	5.7	-30	8.1	18.6	-56
Lafayette	71.0	70.3	1	44.8	44.1	2	6.4	7.6	-16	1.4	2.5	-44	2.6	8.2	-68
Lamar	56.0	77.9	-28	41.3	42.3	-2	12.3	17.4	-29	2.6	4.1	-37	3.3	6.7	-51
Lauderdale	70.0	70.2	-0	46.1	45.6	1	16.4	18.5	-11	5.0	6.4	-22	5.4	8.4	-36
Lawrence	92.0	106.2	-13	53.7	53.1	1	18.9	21.7	-13	4.2	5.0	-16	7.3	10.5	-30
Leake	94.0	86.7	8	68.9	65.7	5	20.3	23.5	-14	4.3	5.3	-19	5.7	12.6	-55
Lee	65.0	69.3	-6	39.5	36.8	7	8.9	11.8	-25	2.2	2.5	-12	4.1	9.2	-55

**Issaquena County data combined with Sharkey County

	WIC Annual Average Participation as % of Potential Eligible			Percent Students Eligible for Free Lunch			Percent Population Receiving Food Stamps			Percent of Population Receiving AFDC			Annual Average Unemployment Rate		
	10/95-6/96	10/92-9/93	% CHANGE	1995	1991	% CHANGE	June 1995	June 1991	% CHANGE	June 1995	June 1988	% CHANGE	1995	1985	% CHANGE
Mississippi	70.0	75.2	-7	54.8	60.4	-9	17.9	20.7	-14	5.3	6.8	-22	6.1	10.3	-41
Leflore	88.0	80.9	9	86.5	80.1	8	31.2	34.7	-10	11.3	12.8	-10	9.4	12.7	-26
Lincoln	84.0	91.8	-9	50.5	50.6	-0	17.0	17.8	-4	4.1	5.2	-21	5.9	13.7	-57
Lowndes	54.0	61.5	-12	47.9	45.5	5	15.8	15.8	0	5.3	5.9	-10	5.4	8.3	-35
Madison	56.0	58.1	-4	63.0	67.6	-7	18.9	24.0	-21	6.2	8.6	-28	3.7	9.4	-61
Marion	82.0	69.1	19	61.7	61.4	0	24.7	25.7	-4	5.6	6.5	-14	7.4	10.5	-30
Marshall	89.0	76.1	17	80.2	79.4	1	23.8	30.5	-22	5.7	7.3	-22	9.8	13.9	-29
Monroe	78.0	81.3	-4	46.9	47.8	-2	11.8	14.7	-20	3.4	4.8	-29	9.3	9.8	-5
Montgomery	102.0	97.4	5	66.6	63.7	5	19.6	23.3	-16	4.8	9.3	-48	6.7	15.7	-57
Neshoba	76.0	77.0	-1	45.7	48.3	-5	15.1	18.4	-18	3.4	4.2	-19	3.8	12.7	-70
Newton	99.0	76.5	29	51.7	49.7	4	15.5	16.1	-4	3.3	3.7	-11	8.0	11.1	-28
Noxubee	87.0	94.9	-8	89.2	89.7	-1	35.6	38.3	-7	10.8	14.7	-27	8.9	14.9	-40
Oktibbeha	80.0	82.5	-3	67.1	63.2	6	13.8	16.3	-15	3.9	6.7	-42	3.0	7.9	-62
Panola	66.0	71.9	-8	74.9	70.4	6	23.5	24.9	-6	6.1	8.9	-31	8.5	13.2	-36
Pearl River	65.0	66.6	-2	47.5	42.7	11	18.0	20.5	-12	5.2	5.2	0	5.7	11.1	-49
Perry	66.0	81.0	-19	55.1	55.2	-0	20.0	25.5	-22	4.9	6.8	-28	7.7	14.2	-46
Pike	86.0	77.8	10	62.3	60.8	2	23.0	24.7	-7	7.5	9.3	-19	6.0	12.4	-52
Pontotoc	70.0	58.8	19	32.9	31.1	6	8.0	10.1	-21	1.2	1.7	-29	5.3	7.6	-30
Prentiss	74.0	83.5	-11	39.4	40.5	-3	11.3	15.5	-27	1.7	1.8	-6	6.6	11.8	-44
Quitman	95.0	78.0	22	92.6	88.3	5	39.0	42.8	-9	12.3	16.0	-23	13.2	15.7	-16
Rankin	76.0	72.0	6	28.2	28.3	-0	8.4	8.3	1	1.8	1.3	38	3.0	5.2	-42
Scott	85.0	100.4	-15	59.2	56.4	5	15.1	17.9	-16	3.6	5.2	-31	4.8	10.2	-53
Sharkey	76.0	87.3	-13	90.8	86.1	5	42.4	47.3	-10	15.4	19.5	-21	18.4	18.1	2
Simpson	65.0	75.0	-13	61.5	58.4	5	17.2	17.7	-3	3.5	3.8	-8	5.3	7.9	-33
Smith	75.0	81.9	-8	47.8	48.1	-1	15.0	17.4	-14	2.2	2.6	-15	3.9	8.4	-54
Stone	95.0	135.1	-30	45.3	44.3	2	19.4	19.5	-1	6.0	6.2	-3	6.7	16.0	-58
Sunflower	72.0	78.0	-8	85.3	81.8	4	32.2	34.5	-7	11.4	13.0	-12	11.0	11.9	-8
Tallahatchie	82.0	91.6	-10	83.4	82.7	1	30.2	40.0	-25	7.8	14.2	-45	11.6	10.8	7
Tate	76.0	97.1	-22	45.9	46.6	-2	13.5	17.6	-23	3.6	6.0	-40	6.3	11.1	-43
Tippah	64.0	56.3	14	44.9	45.6	-2	12.5	16.8	-26	2.3	3.3	-30	5.9	15.9	-63
Tishomingo	85.0	100.7	-16	35.0	38.5	-9	8.8	12.1	-27	1.0	1.6	-38	6.7	21.0	-68
Tunica	57.0	66.1	-14	87.2	95.0	-8	35.3	53.8	-34	10.3	21.0	-51	12.9	19.0	-32
Union	87.0	89.5	-3	31.3	29.6	6	9.6	12.6	-24	1.2	1.9	-37	5.4	7.3	-26
Walthall	74.0	84.9	-13	72.3	70.7	2	25.3	34.8	-27	6.4	9.9	-35	5.8	11.2	-48
Warren	67.0	74.9	-11	50.7	48.5	5	18.3	21.4	-14	5.7	7.7	-26	6.0	10.3	-42
Washington	70.0	63.5	10	80.9	78.2	3	30.8	30.7	0	12.7	14.7	-14	10.1	13.1	-23
Wayne	89.0	86.2	3	60.1	63.2	-5	23.9	30.3	-21	5.8	9.8	-41	7.0	10.0	-30
Webster	79.0	88.9	-11	47.4	50.8	-7	16.2	20.2	-20	4.0	6.1	-34	8.7	9.7	-10
Wilkinson	73.0	91.4	-20	88.7	86.8	2	30.5	35.0	-13	9.3	12.9	-28	10.9	17.7	-38
Winston	72.0	74.9	-4	62.4	61.4	2	21.5	26.6	-19	6.3	8.6	-27	6.3	11.5	-45
Yalobusha	77.0	86.5	-11	62.0	64.0	-3	22.4	29.2	-23	4.9	4.8	2	7.2	9.6	-25
Yazoo	67.0	73.2	-9	80.2	79.0	2	32.8	37.3	-12	10.5	12.5	-16	9.2	10.9	-16


Nobody loves me but
my mother,__ and she
could be jivin' too,__
No body Loves Me But My Mother
Written and Sung by B. B. King
Indianola

Nobody Loves Me But My Mother
Words and Music by B. B. King
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B. B. King grew up in poverty in the Mississippi Delta. He has no childhood photographs. This concert photo was taken in the 1960s.

Mississippi Counties with Highest Percentage of Low Birth-weight Babies Born in 1995	
State	9.8
Humphreys	19.6
Claiborne	17.6
Issaquena	16.1
Webster	14.9
Jasper	14.6
Quitman	14.3
Jefferson	14.1
Yalobusha	14.0
Union	13.8
Attala	13.4

Low Birth-weight

Babies born with low birth-weights either develop too slowly before birth, are born too soon, or both. Regardless of the reason, a low birth-weight reflects the overall health of the mother and can shape future outcomes for the baby. As children, low birth-weight babies routinely have higher medical and education costs.

Mississippi has the highest percentage of low birth-weight births of any state in the nation. The 1996 KIDS COUNT Data Book, using 1993 data for national comparison, ranks Mississippi 50th in the percent of low birth-weight babies. Mississippi's percentage for 1993 is 10.1; the national average for 1993 is 7.2 percent.

Mississippi's low birth-weight births continue previous year trends of almost one in every ten. In 1995, 9.8 percent of all births in Mississippi were low birth-weight births. This is down from 9.9 percent in 1994 and marks a worsening of 11 percent from the 8.8 percent of low birth- weight births ten years ago in 1985. Only a dozen Mississippi counties have a better percentage of low birth-weight births than the national average, with George County having the best at 4.7 percent.

Percent Low Birth-weight Births Have Increased 11%, Yet Total Births Declined 5% from 1985 to 1995

Births with Birth-weights Less Than 2,500 Grams and Total Number of Births, 1985-1995

Infant Mortality

The birth of a baby should be a joyful event. Too many Mississippi families find their joy turned to sorrow with the death of their baby during its first year of life. These deaths can be caused by premature birth, lack of access to health care for the mother and baby, as well as living conditions.

A greater percentage of Mississippi's babies die in their first year than in any other state. Mississippi ranks 50th in infant mortality rate—deaths per 1,000 live births—in the 1996 KIDS COUNT Data Book. The state's 1993 infant mortality rate used for national comparison was 11.5 and is 37 percent higher than the national average rate of 8.4 for the same year.

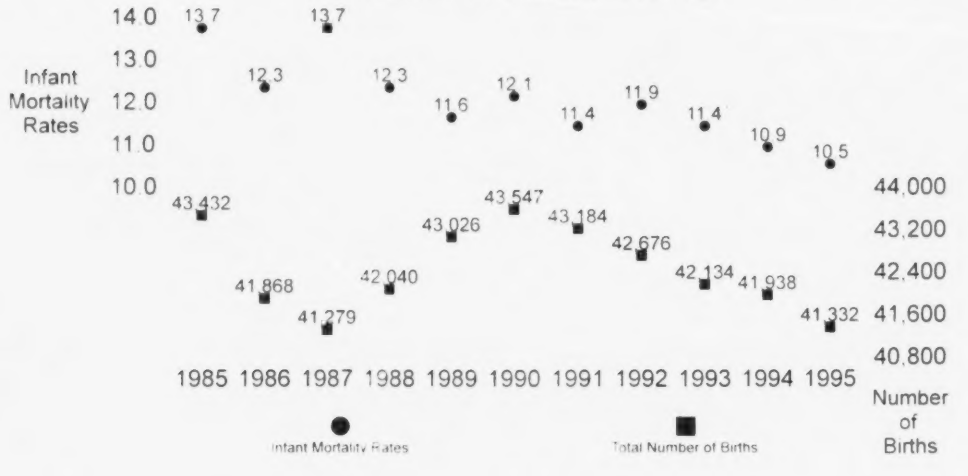
Regardless of national rankings, Mississippi's infant mortality rates continue to improve. Mississippi's most recent five year infant mortality rate, an average for the years 1991 through 1995, was 11.2. This rate is a 24 percent improvement from the rate of 14.8 for 1981-1985. The average infant mortality rate is used at the county level to allow for a more accurate rate for smaller population counties where even one infant death can create a great disparity in numbers.

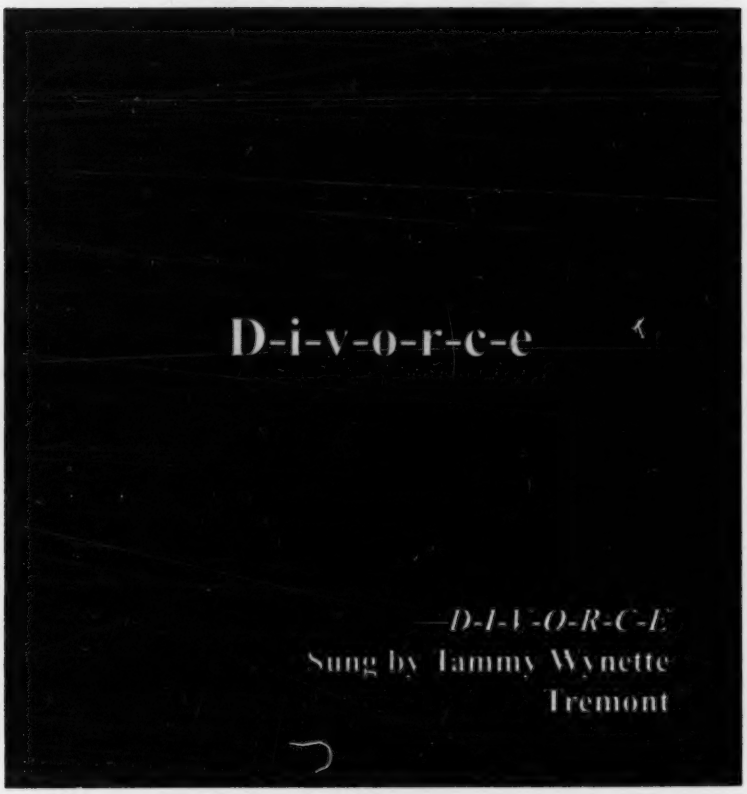
Mississippi Counties with Highest Infant Mortality Rates, 1991-1995

State	11.2
Calhoun	21.0
Tunica	19.7
Coahoma	19.6
Noxubee	18.6
Union	16.6
Leflore	16.5
Panola	16.0
Covington	15.9
Winston	15.8
Adams	15.8
Jefferson	15.6

Infant Mortality Rates Continue Significant Decline - 23%, Total Births Continue Slower Decline - 5%, 1985 to 1995

Deaths Per 1,000 Live Births and Total Number of Births, 1985-1995





D-I-V-O-R-C-E
By: Bobby Braddock and Curly Putman
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Tammy Wynette, second from left at edge of stage, was one of the admiring teens attending this 1956 Elvis homecoming performance at the Mississippi-Alabama Fair and Dairy Show in Tupelo

Mississippi Counties with Highest Percentage of Births to Single Teens, 1995	
State	17.7
Sharkey	38.3
Coahoma	32.6
Tunica	31.9
Holmes	31.2
Yazoo	30.8
Sunflower	30.5
Bolivar	30.0
Leflore	29.3
Washington	27.6
Claiborne	27.1

Births To Single Teens

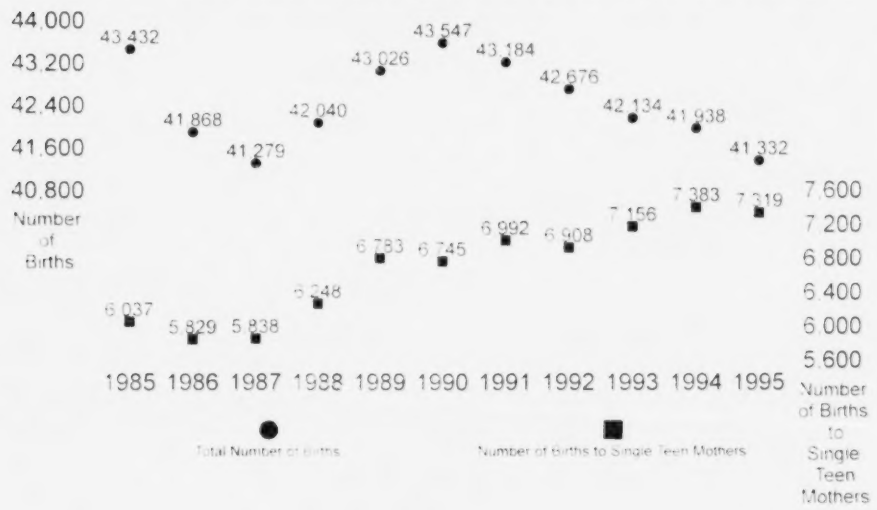
Mississippi has the largest teen birth rate of any state—58 births per 1,000 females ages 15 to 17 in 1993—ranking the state 50th. This measure, used in the 1996 national KIDS COUNT Data Book, does not differentiate between married and unmarried teens.

State data for teen births is more current than that used at the national level. A total of 7,319 babies were born to unmarried teen mothers ages 15 to 19 in 1995. These births were 17.7 percent of all the births for the state last year. In Sharkey, Coahoma, Tunica, Holmes, Yazoo and Sunflower Counties, more than 30 percent of all babies born in 1995 were born to unmarried teen mothers. Lamar County had the lowest percentage of births to single teens—5.8 percent.

Babies born to teen mothers are more likely to grow up in poverty and struggle academically and socially. Their teen moms are less likely to go back to school or to marry than teens who do not have babies.

Births to Single Teens Increased 21%, 1985-1995, But Decreased 1%, 1994-1995
Total Births Declined 5%, 1985-1995; 1.5%, 1994-1995

Births to Unmarried Teens Mothers Ages 15 to 19 and Total Births, 1985-1995



Single-Parent Families and Working Poor Families

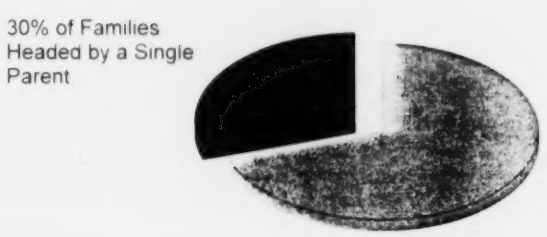
One of every three Mississippi families with children is headed by a single parent, according to the 1993 data used by the 1996 KIDS COUNT Data Book. Mississippi ranks 47th in the percentage of families with children headed by a single parent. Mississippi ties with Florida and Tennessee in this ranking. Louisiana ranks 50th and the District of Columbia ranks 51st. Thirty-two percent of Louisiana's families with children are headed by a single parent; 58 percent of Washington D.C.'s are headed by a single parent.

While there has long been a concern over the easily upset, financial fragility of single-parent families, new data highlighted in the 1996 KIDS COUNT Data Book discovered an increasing population of children growing up in working poor families. These children live in households with two parents, with at least one parent working all year. Mississippi has the nation's highest percentage of children living in working poor families; 13 percent of all the state's children are growing up in working poor families. This is more than double the national percentage of 7.6. Low-to-minimum wage-earning parents simply do not always make enough to supply their families with basic needs such as food, clothing and adequate housing and health care.

Data revealed in the national 1996 KIDS COUNT Data Book ranks Mississippi 1st in the percent change in per capita income from 1990 to 1994. The per capita income increased 12 percent during this time period. The national average change was only 3 percent.

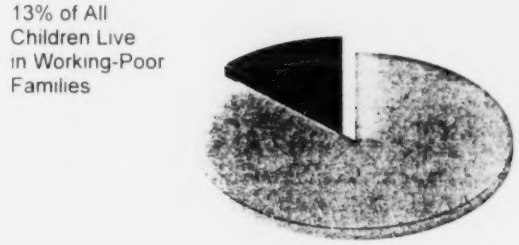
1 in 3 Mississippi Families with Children Are Headed by a Single Parent

Percentage of Families with Own Children Under Age 18 Headed by a Single Parent, 1993



More Than 1 in 8 Mississippi Children Live in Working-Poor Families

Percentage of All Children Living in Families That Live Below the Poverty Level with at Least One Parent Working 50 or More Weeks a Year, 1993



Percent Change in Per Capita Income, 1990-1994

Then she said, "I got some news this mornin' from Choctaw Ridge, Today Billy Joe McAllister jumped off the Tallahatchee Bridge."

—*Ode to Billy Joe*
Words and Music by Bobbie Gentry
Greenwood

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Bobbie Gentry at age 3.

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Mississippi Counties with Highest Child Death Rates, 1995

State	42.2
Scott	142.1
Tunica	125.5
Newton	117.0
Itawamba	109.7
Benton	104.2
Sharkey	100.0
Jasper	99.0
Tishomingo	92.9
Simpson	90.3
Noxubee	89.4

Mississippi Counties with Highest Number of Child Deaths, 1995

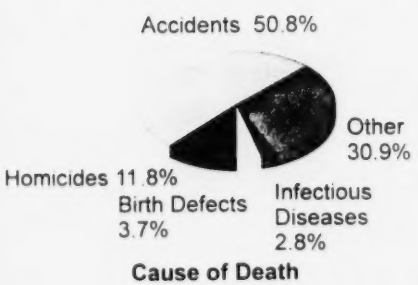
State	246
Hinds	20
Harrison	16
Lauderdale	10
Forrest	9
Bolivar	9
Lowndes	8
Scott	8
Washington	8
Rankin	6
Pike	6
Lee	6
Leflore	6

Child Deaths

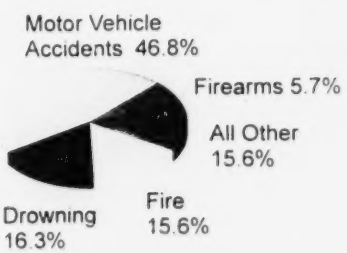
A greater percentage of children ages 1 to 14 per 100,000 die in Mississippi than in any other state, except for Louisiana and Alaska. According to the 1993 data used in the 1996 KIDS COUNT Data Book, Mississippi's child death rate was 41. This rate tied with Louisiana's rate of 41, giving both states a ranking of 48, which was slightly better than Alaska's rank of 50th with a rate of 46. The District of Columbia ranks 51 with a rate of 57. The national average child death rate was 30.

In 1995, Mississippi's child death rate was 42.2; 246 children ages 1 to 14 died. This was an 18 percent improvement from 1985. In that year, 293 children died and the child death rate was 51.6. Hinds County had the highest number of child deaths last year—20, followed by two other high population counties—Harrison with 16 and Lauderdale with 10. Scott County, with 8 child deaths, had the state's highest child death rate—142.1. Fifteen counties had no child deaths in 1995. More than half of Mississippi's children die from accidents. Of the children dying in accidents last year, 47 percent died in automobile accidents, 16 percent died in accidental drownings, 16 percent died in fire related accidents and 6 percent died in deaths caused by firearms.

Child Deaths Ages 1 - 14 by Cause, 1995



Cause of Death



Type of Accident

Teen Deaths

Teens feel they're indestructible, a belief that can lead to accidents—and in recent years to more deaths from violence. Mississippi ranks 49th among the states in the teen violent death rate for teens ages 15 to 19 per 100,000 teens according to the 1993 data used in the 1996 national KIDS COUNT Data Book. Mississippi's rate was 109 compared to a national rate of 69.

In more recent 1995 state data, Mississippi has a teen death rate of 101. Issaquena County had the highest teen death rate of 628.9. Hinds County had the highest number of deaths, 28, followed by Harrison County with 12. Twelve counties had no teen deaths.

Teen accidents have increased only 14 percent since 1989, but teen homicides have jumped 128 percent in the past six years. Teen suicides have increased 57 percent.

Mississippi Counties with Highest Teen Death Rates, 1995

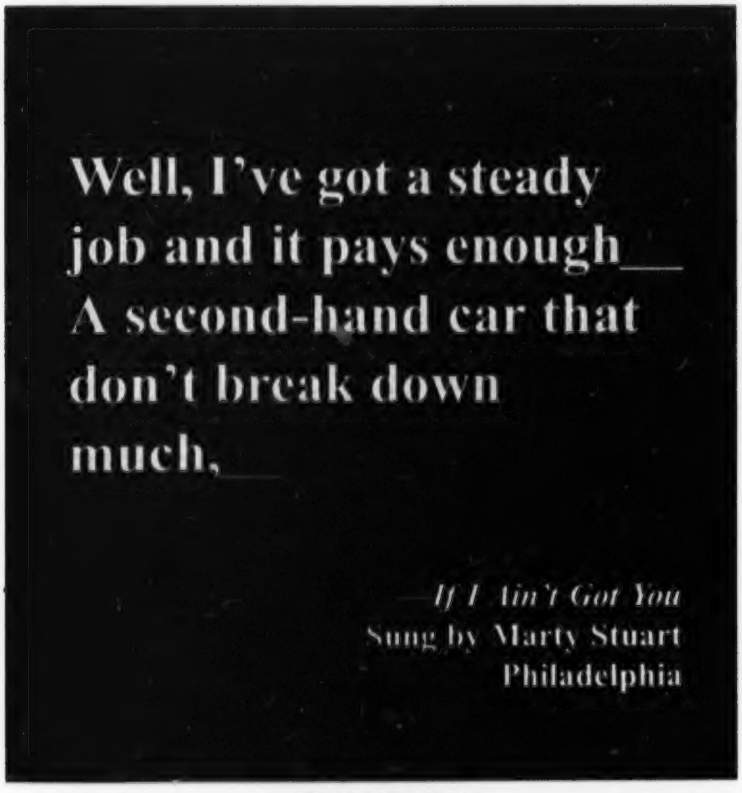
State	101.0
Issaquena	628.9
Lawrence	472.6
Leake	337.4
Prentiss	323.6
Stone	261.8
Walthall	241.7
Pontotoc	230.9
Union	229.2
Greene	226.2
Clarke	216.5

Teen Accidents Increased 14%, Homicides, 128% and Suicides, 57% from 1989 to 1995

Number of Deaths/Death Rates of Mississipi Teens 15-19 Years Old from Selected Causes, 1989-1995

Mississippi Counties with Highest Number of Teen Deaths, 1995

State	225
Hinds	28
Harrison	12
Prentiss	7
Jackson	7
Pearl River	6
DeSoto	6



If I Ain't Got You

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If I Ain't Got You was co-written by Craig Wiseman of Hattiesburg. Craig started playing drums in the school band at 12. He studied music at the University of Southern Mississippi while playing evening gigs with a band. Craig moved to Nashville in 1985. His songs have been sung by Faith Hill, Randy Travis, Charlie Daniels, Confederate Railroad and Diamond Rio. Craig was named one of *Billboard* magazine's top 25 song writers in 1994 and 1995.

Marty Stuart started strumming at an early age.

Mississippi Counties with Best Graduation Rates, 1995	
State	75.1
Newton	87.9
Webster	86.6
Jasper	85.0
Montgomery	84.6
Greene	84.3
Forrest	84.1
Wilkinson	83.9
Jeff Davis	83.7
Choctaw	83.5
Marion	83.1

High School Graduation

Three out of four—75.1—high school seniors graduated from Mississippi's public schools in 1995. The state graduation rate has remained constant for much of the 90s. Graduation rates can fluctuate greatly from school to school; however, graduation rates continue to be one statistic most easily influenced and improved by community commitment.

Newton County had the highest graduation rate in 1995—87.9. In all, 30 counties had graduation rates above 80. Quitman County had the lowest graduation rate—49.3. The graduation rates of counties with multiple school districts is an average.

The 1996 national KIDS COUNT Data Book ranks Mississippi 27th in the percent of teens ages 16 to 19 who are high school dropouts for 1993. According to this data, 9 percent of Mississippi teens dropped out of school in 1993. The national average was also 9 percent for this year. The state had a 25 percent improvement in this indicator from 15 percent in 1985.

County Graduation Rates

Graduation Rates by County, 1995

*(*Counties with More Than One District Have Averaged Rates)*

Teen Unemployment

The 1996 national KIDS COUNT Data Book ranks Mississippi 37th in the percentage of teens not attending school and not working. This data books records 11 percent of the state's teens as not working in 1993. This is up from a ranking of 45th using 1992 data, with 11.9 percent of teens not working and not in school. The newest data show a 25 percent improvement since 1985. Nationally, this measure has improved only 9 percent since 1985.

County-level unemployment figures are not available by age so annual average unemployment rates are used for each county. The state's 1995 unemployment rates have improved 41 percent since 1985. Unemployment rates have improved in all but three Mississippi counties—Jeff Davis, Sharkey and Tallahatchie—which show small downward changes of 1, 2 and 7 percent.

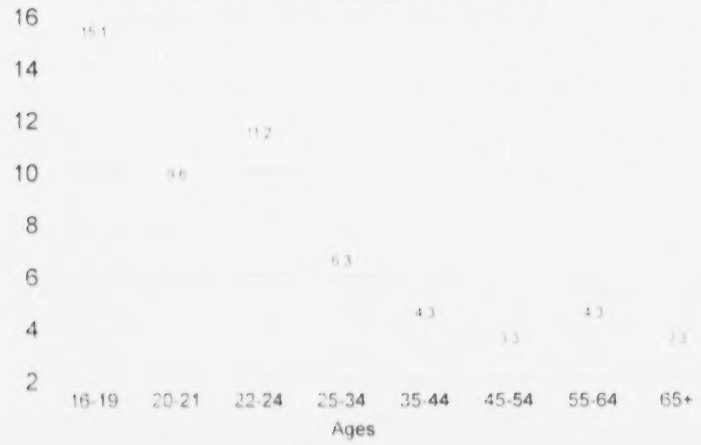
Statewide information for teens ages 16 to 19 prepared by the Mississippi Employment Security Commission in December 1995 for 1996 planning estimates 41.8 percent of this age group will work in 1996. Teens are 6 percent of the state's estimated labor force for 1996. The unemployment rate for teens is estimated at 15.1 percent for 1996. This remains the highest of any age group of workers.

Mississippi Counties with Highest Annual Average Unemployment Rate, 1995

State	6.1
Sharkey	18.4
Jefferson	15.5
Issaquena	15.4
Quitman	13.2
Tunica	12.9
Jeff Davis	12.8
Humphreys	12.1
Holmes	12.1
Tallahatchie	11.6
Sunflower	11.0
Wilkinson	10.9

Teens Have the Highest Unemployment Rates of Any Age Group

Unemployment Rates by Age for Planning Year 1996



Source: Annual Planning Information, State of Mississippi, Planning Year 1995
Labor Market Information, MS Employment Security Commission

They said change your clothes,__ she said no,_ I won't.__ They said comb your hair,__ she said some kids don't.__
Wild One
Sung by Faith Hill
Star

WILD ONE

Words and Music by JAIME KYLE, PAT BUNCH and WILL RAMBEAUX
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Faith Hill as a toddler.

Mississippi Counties with Highest Numbers of Juvenile Incarcerations, FY1996	
State	1,589
Harrison	149
Washington	91
Hinds	85
Lauderdale	77
Coahoma	68
Warren	67
Lee	61
Lowndes	60
Leflore	57
Sunflower	50

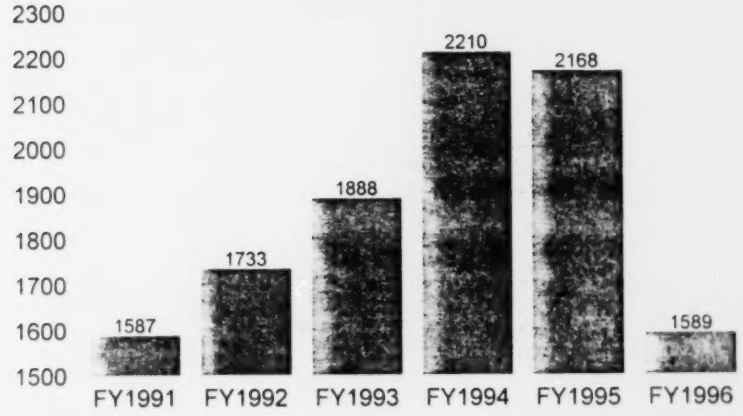
JUVENILES

From fiscal year 1995 to fiscal year 1996, the number of juveniles ages 10 to 18 committed to Mississippi's training schools dropped from 2,168 to 1,589, a dramatic 26.7 percent decrease. The juvenile incarceration rate per 1,000 youth likewise dropped from 6.4 to 4.7, a 26.5 percent change. The number of juveniles served by community services dropped 5 percent from 24,223 in fiscal year 1995 to 23,135 in fiscal year 1996.

The national 1996 KIDS COUNT Data Book used the 1993 juvenile violent crime arrest rate for youth ages 10 to 17 per 100,000 for nationwide comparison. Mississippi's rate was 286. As in past years, this measure records a steady increase in juvenile crime, up from a rate of 131 in 1985. But Mississippi has retained a better ranking, 15th this year, because other states have much higher rates—compare top ranked Vermont with a juve-

Juveniles Served by Institutions Dropped 26.7% from 1995 to 1996

Number of Juveniles Served by Training Institutions, Fiscal Year 1991 to 1996



nile violent crime arrest rate of 41 with 51st ranked District of Columbia with a rate of 1,548.

Harrison County had 149 commitments to the training schools in fiscal year 1996; Washington County had 91; Hinds County had 85. Six counties—Choctaw, Franklin, Humphreys, Issaquena, Kemper and Tishomingo—sent no youth to the training schools. In comparing juvenile incarceration rates, Pontotoc County ranks 1st with a rate of 41.4. Tallahatchie County had a rate of .4. Twenty-seven counties had rates greater than the state average rate of 4.7.

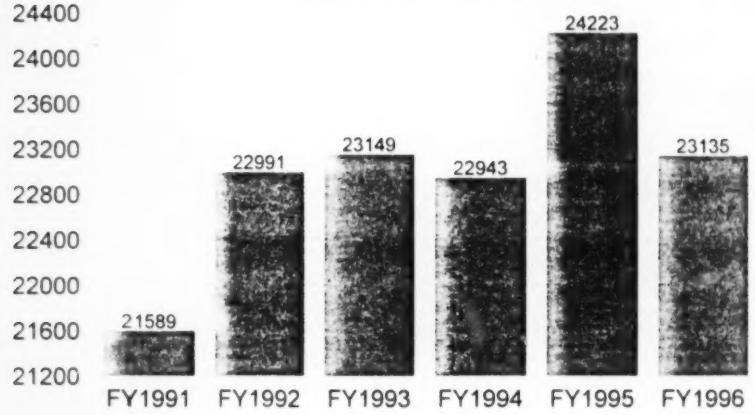
Mississippi's juvenile incarceration rate includes only those juveniles served in state-supported juvenile facilities and does not include counts for juveniles served in adult correctional facilities or private facilities. Individuals can be counted more than once if committed to training school more than once in the same year.

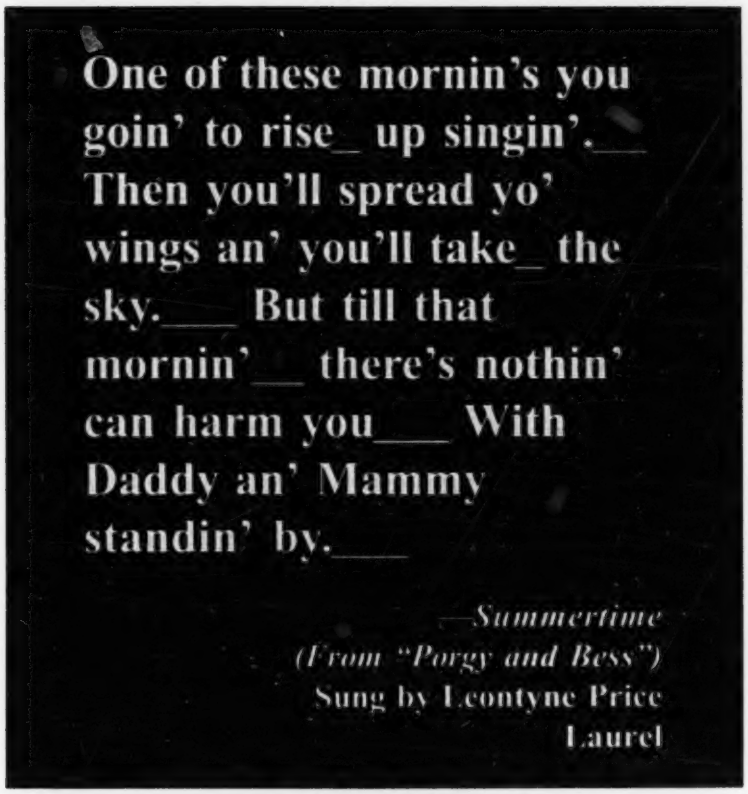
Mississippi Counties with Highest Juvenile Incarcerations Rates, FY1996

State	4.7
Pontotoc	41.4
Coahoma	13.7
Leflore	10.5
Holmes	10.4
Tunica	10.4
Sunflower	10.3
Warren	9.9
Quitman	9.5
Washington	8.7
Hancock	8.7
Grenada	8.3
Pike	8.3
Lauderdale	8.2

Juveniles Served by Community Services Dropped Only 5% from 1995 to 1996

Number of Juveniles Served by Community Services. Fiscal Year 1991 to 1996




One of these mornin's you goin' to rise_ up singin'.__ Then you'll spread yo' wings an' you'll take_ the sky.___ But till that mornin'__ there's nothin' can harm you___ With Daddy an' Mammy standin' by.___
—Summertime
(From "Porgy and Bess")
Sung by Leontyne Price
Laurel

SUMMERTIME
(From "PORGY AND BESS"®)
WORDS and MUSIC by GEORGE GERSHWIN,
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Photograph courtesy of the
Lauren Rogers Museum of Art, Laurel

Opera star Leontyne Price early in her career.

Selected Data - Adams County to Lee County

	Estimated Population Under Age 20	Estimated Total Population	Percent Low Birth-Weight Babies as Percent of All Births		% CHANGE	Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 Live Births) 5-Year Average		% CHANGE	Percent Births to Single Teens Less Than Age 20 as Percent of All Births		% CHANGE	Child Deaths Ages 1-14 by Number and by Rate (per 100,000 Children)				% CHANGE	Teen Deaths Ages 15-19 by Number and by Rate (per 100,000 Teens)				% CHANGE	Graduation Rate*		% CHANGE	Juvenile Incarcerations Ages 10-18 by Number and by Rate (per 1,000 Teens)				% CHANGE
												1995		1985			1995		1985						FY1996		FY1991		
	1995	July 1995	1995	1985		1991-1995	1981-1985		1995	1985		#	Rate	#	Rate		#	Rate	#	Rate		1995	1989		#	Rate	#	Rate	
Mississippi	856,805	2,697,243	9.8	8.8	11	11.2	14.8	-24	17.7	13.9	2.6	42.2	293	51.6	-18	225	101.0	171	66.1	53	75.1	73.6	2	1,589	4.7	1,587	4.7	0
Adams	11,369	34,645	12.9	11.6	11	15.8	16.0	-1	20.4	14.4	42	24.8	6	71.9	-66	1	36.8	2	51.2	-28	71.0	52.3	36	21	4.6	27	5.9	-22
Alcorn	8,738	32,781	10.6	6.4	66	10.1	9.0	12	13.2	5.0	162	32.2	4	56.8	-43	5	203.4	4	140.9	44	82.0	69.5	18	22	5.6	8	2.0	180
Amite	4,399	13,561	6.4	10.3	-38	4.8	13.7	-65	17.2	15.3	10	0	0	0	***	1	93.0	0	0	***	73.2	70.5	4	8	4.3	5	2.7	59
Attala	5,437	18,433	13.4	8.2	63	10.0	17.7	-44	18.7	16.5	12	51.2	3	69.3	-26	3	203.8	1	53.6	280	69.0	77.4	-11	4	1.7	5	2.1	-19
Benton	2,539	7,937	8.5	12.4	-31	10.5	9.5	11	18.8	12.4	52	104.2	1	52.6	98	0	0	1	116.0	-100	64.9	89.5	-27	1	0.9	0	0	***
Bolivar	15,411	41,434	11.3	11.1	2	12.6	17.7	-29	30.0	29.0	9	81.7	6	49.3	66	4	89.5	4	74.8	20	77.2	73.3	5	23	3.6	28	4.4	-18
Calhoun	4,178	14,862	11.9	12.2	-2	21.0	14.0	50	20.7	12.1	72	66.8	2	58.8	14	2	170.6	2	140.1	22	80.0	73.0	10	3	1.7	7	3.9	-56
Carroll	3,067	9,900	10.1	7.9	28	13.6	15.4	-12	19.2	18.3	0	0	1	45.6	-100	0	0	1	98.6	-100	73.7	90.7	-19	6	4.7	2	1.6	194
Chickasaw	5,758	18,055	7.9	6.7	18	10.3	19.8	-48	18.0	12.0	52	46.7	1	24.2	93	1	70.9	2	117.7	-40	82.4	73.7	12	11	4.6	1	0.4	1050
Choctaw	2,826	9,123	8.8	12.5	-30	8.6	15.5	-45	12.8	15.3	-11	47.2	1	49.2	-4	0	0	0	0	***	83.5	61.8	35	0	0	1	0.7	-100
Claiborne	4,507	11,567	17.6	7.6	132	14.0	16.7	-16	27.1	14.6	85	0	0	80.3	-100	2	108.9	0	0	***	80.4	71.9	12	4	2.6	1	0.7	271
Clarke	5,382	17,741	11.6	5.0	132	9.9	11.1	-11	14.2	14.7	-2	51.1	1	26.1	96	3	216.5	1	63.4	241	77.6	69.2	12	6	2.6	3	1.3	100
Clay	7,320	21,765	7.6	7.0	9	13.3	15.4	-14	20.2	16.4	24	78.1	1	20.5	281	2	102.9	1	46.4	122	67.3	64.9	4	19	6.3	5	1.7	271
Coahoma	11,994	31,558	12.2	10.4	17	19.6	26.3	-25	32.6	28.2	16	11.8	3	32.0	-63	5	171.7	5	119.3	44	57.9	56.5	2	68	13.7	46	9.3	47
Copiah	9,069	28,639	11.1	9.7	14	10.1	10.9	-7	19.6	15.4	22	31.5	5	86.4	-64	1	33.1	1	32.1	3	82.6	85.5	-3	19	4.9	13	3.4	44
Covington	5,230	17,239	11.9	9.2	29	15.9	17.7	-10	20.0	17.3	16	25.2	1	27.2	-7	1	71.8	1	62.6	15	71.8	88.8	-19	8	3.4	4	1.7	100
DeSoto	27,764	83,567	6.9	8.8	-22	8.2	11.6	-29	10.6	7.2	42	13.1	3	21.8	-40	6	111.4	1	17.0	555	74.7	76.5	-2	24	2.7	15	1.7	59
Forrest	22,312	72,553	11.0	9.8	12	12.6	12.8	-2	17.5	13.3	39	65.1	6	46.8	39	1	15.5	2	28.8	-46	84.1	70.1	20	45	5.9	104	13.7	-57
Franklin	2,500	8,260	10.4	8.2	27	12.9	16.2	-20	14.6	10.9	31	51.3	3	170.6	-70	0	0	1	133.9	-100	82.8	62.1	33	0	0	2	1.8	-100
George	5,615	18,230	4.7	6.6	-29	5.0	14.4	-65	10.5	5.9	73	77.1	3	78.0	-1	0	0	2	133.2	-100	81.4	65.7	24	12	5.0	6	2.5	100
Greene	3,510	11,476	5.3	7.9	-33	8.2	15.5	-47	13.0	11.8	11	41.8	4	159.4	-74	2	226.2	1	107.4	111	84.3	65.5	29	5	3.4	0	0	***
Grenada	6,939	22,211	10.4	10.3	1	11.6	13.9	-17	19.8	22.7	-10	0	6	124.9	-100	2	115.5	1	49.0	136	74.5	60.8	23	24	8.3	35	12.1	-31
Hancock	10,678	37,814	7.8	8.3	-6	8.1	11.3	-28	13.3	9.0	45	73.9	2	36.5	102	2	82.8	0	0	***	68.7	63.4	8	35	8.7	33	8.2	6
Harrison	52,032	175,240	7.6	6.9	10	8.6	11.3	-24	15.6	9.6	66	44.6	8	24.2	84	12	90.0	10	56.7	59	67.6	70.4	-4	149	7.8	111	5.8	34
Hinds	80,236	251,031	12.4	9.5	31	11.2	13.4	-16	18.1	13.5	30	35.9	25	47.8	-25	28	129.8	19	74.8	74	80.8	78.8	3	85	2.7	136	4.4	-39
Holmes	7,800	21,325	9.7	11.3	-14	13.4	24.6	-46	31.2	20.8	54	67.5	2	34.9	93	1	45.3	3	99.4	-54	76.7	72.2	6	36	10.4	19	5.5	89
Humphreys	4,378	11,533	19.6	12.2	61	13.2	32.7	-60	21.2	25.9	-12	58.1	2	54.6	6	1	92.6	3	185.5	-50	76.1	63.4	20	0	0	28	14.9	-100
Issaquena	620	1,676	16.1	8.3	94	14.2	14.6	-3	22.6	16.7	30	0	1	151.3	-100	1	628.9	0	0	***	**	**	**	0	0	1	3.5	-100
Itawamba	5,172	20,902	7.0	4.3	63	6.5	9.6	-32	8.4	5.6	54	109.7	0	0	***	1	54.2	3	152.1	-64	74.3	26.4	181	11	4.8	13	5.6	-14
Jackson	41,859	128,494	8.0	7.1	13	10.9	12.0	-9	15.5	9.0	74	15.1	8	27.9	-46	7	71.4	7	57.6	24	73.3	76.1	-4	41	2.5	84	5.2	-52
Jasper	5,613	17,433	14.6	9.0	62	8.7	16.6	-48	19.3	11.5	68	99.0	2	49.7	99	2	132.5	1	62.2	113	85.0	68.9	23	2	0.8	3	1.2	-33
Jefferson	3,117	8,549	14.1	9.6	47	15.6	16.2	-4	22.1	16.9	31	41.5	1	42.8	-3	1	121.4	1	99.5	22	75.7	59.7	27	3	2.1	7	4.8	-56
Jeff Davis	4,497	14,073	9.2	10.6	-13	11.4	11.4	0	22.5	15.9	41	29.6	2	56.4	-48	0	0	1	72.6	-100	83.7	54.8	53	9	4.3	0	0	***
Jones	18,412	63,001	10.8	7.3	48	7.5	17.9	-58	15.1	9.6	57	37.7	5	39.7	-5	4	77.9	3	50.9	53	81.4	81.8	-0	24	3.1	24	3.1	0
Kemper	3,411	10,429	8.0	7.3	10	8.7	16.2	-46	20.3	11.9	70	0	1	42.1	-100	0	0	0	0	***	68.8	100.0	-31	0	0	1	0.7	-100
Lafayette	10,054	33,463	6.9	6.9	0	10.2	8.9	15	13.5	10.1	32	39.2	1	19.2	104	3	72.7	1	29.0	151	78.1	74.1	5	12	4.0	14	4.6	-13
Lamar	9,984	33,642	9.6	6.2	55	9.2	7.9	16	5.8	5.7	2	28.1	4	72.3	-61	2	84.0	2	82.4	2	78.5	78.8	-0	4	1.0	1	0.2	400
Lauderdale	23,508	76,910	11.1	8.0	39	11.9	14.6	-18	14.8	13.2	10	60.8	9	55.6	9	5	80.6	5	68.7	17	77.1	80.9	-5	77	8.2	82	8.7	-6
Lawrence	3,859	12,780	7.8	9.9	-21	10.4	7.2	44	16.6	5.0	232	68.6	1	34.6	98	5	472.6	2	158.6	198	78.8	60.9	29	4	2.3	1	0.6	283
Leake	5,748	19,056	10.5	9.4	12	13.6	20.6	-34	14.5	11.2	29	24.4	4	97.6	-75	5	337.4	2	115.4	192	77.4	71.7	8	4	1.6	8	3.3	-52
Lee	22,766	72,272	8.8	8.2	7	13.4	12.3	9	15.4	8.9	76	41.5	5	40.5	2	3	61.2	3	58.1	5	70.3	63.1	11	61	7.6	61	7.6	0

Note: Percent Change - negative number shows improvement, positive number shows worsening of indicator with the exception of the Graduation Rate where a positive number indicates improvement.

*County average used for counties with multiple school districts

**Issaquena County data combined with Sharkey County

***No increase in number,or an increase in number from 0 to any higher number which signifies a 100 percent increase, but creates an error in computation

Selected Data - Leflore County to Yazoo County

	Estimated Population Under Age 20	Estimated Total Population	Percent Low Birth-Weight Babies as Percent of All Births		% CHANGE	Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 Live Births) 5-Year Average		% CHANGE	Percent Births to Single Teens Less Than Age 20 as Percent of All Births		% CHANGE	Child Deaths Ages 1-14 by Number and by Rate per 100,000 Children)			% CHANGE	Teen Deaths Ages 15-19 by Number and by Rate (per 100,000 Teens)				% CHANGE	Graduation Rate*		% CHANGE	Juvenile Incarcerations Ages 10-18 by Number and by Rate (per 1,000 Teens)				% CHANGE
												1995		1985			1995		1985						FY1996		FY1991		
	1995	July 1995	1995	1985		1991-1995	1981-1985		1995	1985		#	Rate	#	Rate		#	Rate	#	Rate		1995	1989		#	Rate	#	Rate	
Mississippi	856,805	2,697,243	9.8	8.8	11	11.2	14.8	-24	17.7	13.9	26	42.2	293	51.6	-18	225	101.0	171	66.1	53	75.1	73.6	2	1,589	4.7	1,587	4.7	0
Leflore	13,152	37,410	10.7	12.0	-11	16.5	25.2	-35	29.3	24.2	26	63.3	4	40.0	58	5	147.7	2	42.4	248	80.4	75.8	6	57	10.5	56	10.3	2
Lincoln	9,665	31,417	9.6	10.2	-6	6.9	15.2	-55	14.4	11.3	22	30.3	5	72.4	-58	3	115.1	1	35.9	221	81.1	92.8	-13	28	6.6	42	9.9	-33
Lowndes	19,911	60,823	8.9	8.3	7	15.2	10.6	43	15.1	13.3	18	58.3	9	69.9	-17	3	61.8	2	33.8	83	76.7	80.0	-4	60	7.9	34	4.5	76
Madison	22,712	66,282	8.5	9.2	-8	7.6	16.0	-53	13.7	16.4	-12	15.9	3	29.7	-46	5	122.0	1	22.4	445	76.2	99.7	-24	30	4.5	35	5.2	-13
Marion	7,975	26,258	10.6	10.4	2	9.8	10.7	-8	19.4	9.2	112	33.0	4	69.2	-52	1	45.4	1	40.2	13	83.1	76.0	9	4	1.1	7	1.9	-42
Marshall	10,878	32,078	10.7	10.6	1	15.1	14.7	3	20.9	12.6	62	27.9	6	84.4	-67	5	184.8	2	57.2	223	67.3	70.6	-5	13	3.1	25	6.0	-48
Monroe	11,216	37,771	10.1	7.3	38	12.2	15.5	-21	15.6	11.1	44	49.5	9	107.9	-54	5	163.6	3	87.5	87	76.5	77.1	-1	13	2.7	8	1.7	59
Montgomery	3,683	12,428	8.9	6.0	48	12.9	15.3	-16	18.5	22.3	-10	0	4	141.3	-100	1	97.8	0	0	***	84.6	67.2	26	4	2.4	4	2.4	0
Neshoba	8,562	26,747	12.5	7.5	67	15.5	14.3	8	15.9	10.3	52	35.0	7	128.4	-73	1	46.1	1	47.5	-3	82.6	78.8	5	10	2.8	11	3.1	-10
Newton	6,509	21,256	10.0	7.8	28	12.0	11.0	9	16.9	12.4	35	117.0	3	73.0	60	1	51.4	2	98.8	-48	87.9	57.0	54	15	5.6	7	2.6	115
Noxubee	4,471	12,407	8.0	15.2	-47	18.6	15.6	19	18.3	26.0	-30	89.4	2	60.8	47	2	181.3	0	0	***	79.2	94.9	-17	1	0.5	6	3.2	-84
Oktibbeha	12,315	38,653	8.0	8.3	-4	7.8	12.8	-39	17.4	8.3	111	14.7	3	46.5	-68	1	20.4	0	0	***	72.0	71.6	1	12	3.3	16	4.3	-23
Panola	11,485	32,407	10.3	7.9	30	16.0	17.0	-6	22.1	19.6	10	0	6	88.5	-100	5	180.1	0	0	***	66.5	73.7	-10	3	0.7	7	1.6	-56
Pearl River	12,878	43,466	7.3	7.8	-6	8.1	16.4	-51	13.9	9.6	41	11.4	4	51.3	-78	6	178.3	2	56.3	217	74.3	75.6	-2	14	2.7	6	1.2	125
Perry	3,697	11,542	6.8	2.7	152	13.2	6.6	100	17.7	10.1	71	38.1	1	41.6	-8	2	206.2	0	0	***	71.1	71.9	-1	5	3.1	1	0.6	417
Pike	12,067	36,067	11.2	10.2	10	6.2	16.7	-63	22.1	15.6	46	69.3	3	36.2	91	2	59.5	4	112.5	-47	80.2	74.7	7	44	8.3	34	6.4	30
Pontotoc	7,440	24,236	7.9	7.5	5	8.6	9.4	-9	10.7	6.2	70	0	1	22.6	-100	4	230.9	0	0	***	82.1	77.2	6	4	41.4	2	0.7	5814
Prentiss	6,639	23,842	9.4	7.6	24	9.4	10.2	-8	8.4	3.8	120	0	2	39.5	-100	7	323.6	2	85.0	281	72.2	65.7	10	5	1.8	6	2.1	-14
Quitman	3,324	10,100	14.3	12.0	19	12.8	21.7	-41	27.0	24.5	12	75.7	1	30.5	148	1	94.5	1	72.6	30	49.3	44.5	11	16	9.5	5	3.0	217
Rankin	31,095	98,984	7.9	7.0	13	7.6	10.4	-27	10.6	8.4	26	31.8	8	50.0	-36	5	75.5	3	45.8	65	82.1	84.5	-3	24	2.2	46	4.1	-46
Scott	7,841	25,042	10.0	10.7	-7	14.7	19.7	-25	16.0	13.0	28	142.1	1	17.4	717	3	147.6	6	251.9	-41	67.1	67.4	-0	20	6.1	15	4.5	36
Sharkey	2,659	6,917	13.3	8.8	51	7.2	17.1	-58	38.3	29.0	32	100.0	1	44.7	124	0	0	0	0	***	71.3	74.4	-4	6	4.8	1	0.8	500
Simpson	7,527	25,144	10.7	11.2	-4	12.6	21.2	-41	16.5	7.7	115	90.3	3	56.0	61	2	104.2	0	0	***	79.5	76.6	4	8	2.4	2	0.6	300
Smith	4,450	15,093	7.4	5.8	28	10.3	12.7	-19	13.5	7.0	92	61.9	2	59.5	4	0	0	1	72.2	-100	78.9	61.8	28	2	1.0	3	1.5	-33
Stone	3,910	12,382	6.7	6.7	0	9.6	5.0	92	14.0	9.8	41	41.9	2	96.9	-57	3	261.8	2	156.5	67	81.0	55.0	47	5	3.6	5	3.6	0
Sunflower	11,459	35,752	9.5	11.8	-19	11.9	16.6	-28	30.5	30.2	3	36.7	6	69.3	-47	1	31.7	1	26.9	18	73.1	55.5	32	50	10.3	75	15.5	-34
Tallahatchie	4,990	15,052	6.6	10.6	-38	12.7	21.1	-40	25.3	25.5	-2	51.3	3	68.8	-25	0	0	2	102.4	-100	66.2	60.3	10	1	0.4	6	2.5	-84
Tate	7,204	22,737	6.4	8.9	-28	9.9	16.1	-39	16.0	15.0	0	0	2	45.2	-100	1	46.5	0	0	***	78.2	68.2	15	3	1.0	2	0.7	43
Tippah	5,700	20,649	9.2	7.0	31	8.5	15.2	-44	14.7	10.4	42	49.5	2	49.1	1	0	0	2	115.1	-100	77.5	66.5	17	9	3.6	3	1.2	200
Tishomingo	4,580	18,235	6.9	8.3	-17	13.2	21.0	-37	9.3	3.1	203	92.9	1	28.4	227	1	79.9	1	61.3	30	69.7	76.1	-8	0	0	0	0	***
Tunica	3,572	8,132	12.3	7.9	56	19.7	25.1	-22	31.9	30.9	3	125.5	3	109.8	14	1	118.6	3	271.7	-56	70.6	68.6	3	15	10.4	4	2.8	271
Union	6,732	22,875	13.8	8.7	59	16.6	8.6	93	12.6	5.9	113	67.0	1	22.0	205	4	229.2	1	54.0	324	81.6	74.0	10	4	1.4	5	1.8	-22
Walthall	4,732	14,304	6.1	6.8	-10	6.8	14.4	-53	20.5	12.6	60	0	2	61.1	-100	3	241.7	0	0	***	80.7	92.7	-13	10	4.6	0	0	***
Warren	15,679	49,176	10.5	9.5	11	13.5	18.1	-25	18.3	12.7	45	44.6	8	66.8	-33	5	129.9	5	101.3	28	77.1	74.3	4	67	9.9	46	6.8	46
Washington	25,413	66,451	10.4	9.5	9	11.7	16.1	-27	27.6	22.3	28	44.1	16	84.9	-48	4	65.1	3	41.3	58	67.8	81.8	-17	91	8.7	76	7.3	19
Wayne	6,414	19,864	9.8	7.3	34	13.6	14.8	-8	16.2	14.8	2	42.0	1	21.5	95	1	59.6	3	158.6	-62	77.2	61.4	26	7	2.5	15	5.4	-54
Webster	3,078	10,500	14.9	6.9	116	11.6	17.4	-33	13.4	9.7	30	0	2	99.2	-100	1	127.4	2	208.1	-39	86.6	76.9	13	3	2.4	0	0	***
Wilkinson	3,056	9,710	9.2	8.8	5	8.6	12.8	-33	22.5	17.1	30	0	0	0	***	1	131.9	1	90.8	45	83.9	75.7	11	1	0.8	3	2.4	-67
Winston	6,117	19,723	9.3	8.3	12	15.8	16.5	-4	19.8	16.2	23	68.8	1	22.5	206	2	120.2	4	234.1	-49	80.3	97.7	-18	14	5.1	4	1.5	240
Yalobusha	3,598	12,362	14.0	10.7	31	8.8	9.8	-10	11.3	12.9	-10	0	3	105.7	-100	2	195.5	2	166.7	17	82.9	64.0	30	4	2.5	3	1.9	32
Yazoo	8,812	25,489	10.5	12.0	-13	12.2	21.2	-42	30.8	21.1	44	60.6	2	31.2	94	0	0	5	178.0	-100	66.2	59.5	11	17	4.5	16	4.3	5

Note: Percent Change - negative number shows improvement, positive number shows worsening of indicator with the exception of the Graduation Rate where a positive number indicates improvement.

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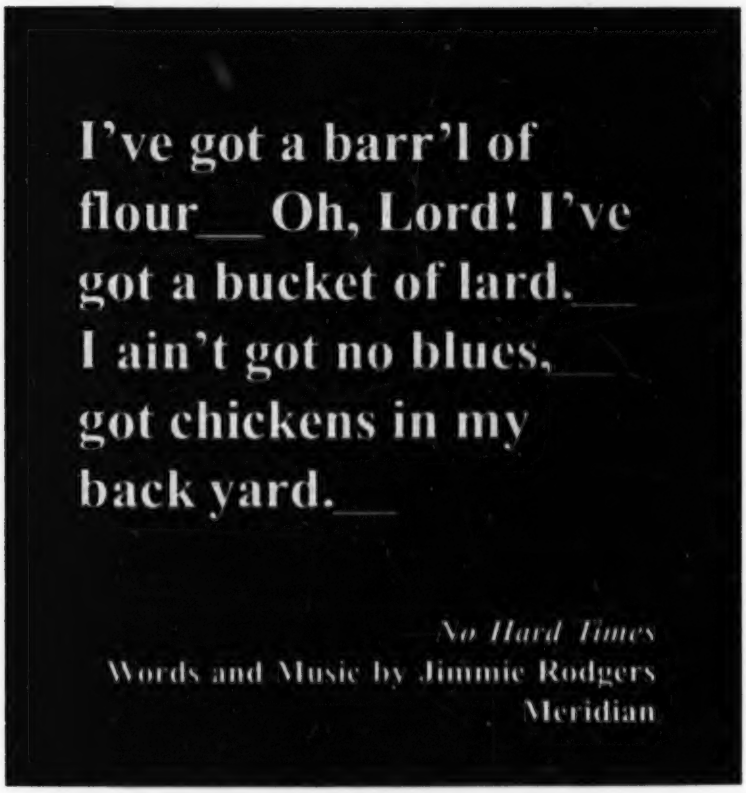
**Issaquena County data combined with Sharkey County

***No increase in number,or an increase in number from 0 to any higher number which signifies a 100 percent increase, but creates an error in computation



NO HARD TIMES by Jimmie Rodgers
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Photograph courtesy of the Jimmie Rodgers Museum, Meridian

Jimmie Rodgers, "The Father of Country Music," attended school in Pine Springs near Meridian shortly after the turn of the century.

What You Can Do to Reduce Childhood Hunger and Undernutrition

Mississippians can all sing from the same songbook when it comes to ensuring that every child has adequate food for growing, developing and learning.

- Learn more about all the nutrition programs operating in your community, which are available and which are not.
- Refer any pregnant women, new mothers and mothers with young children under age five whose income level might allow them to benefit from WIC to the Health Department.
- Help start a school meals program in your community. If there is a school in your community that doesn't have a School Breakfast or Summer Food Service Program, organize a group of citizens to contact school officials and board members to request participation or further participation in the program.
- Find out if your local schools have the School Breakfast and Lunch Programs and how you can help increase student participation. Do families need help in filling out paper work? Are families embarrassed to participate? Are the meals appealing? Is there time for children to sit and eat well during lunch?
- Help your community organize a Summer Food Program. Talk with other community groups and agencies who participate in the program. Churches and other local organizations can get involved in this program. If there is a Summer Food Program in your community, volunteer. Food program sponsors always need volunteers to serve lunch, supervise activities and do community outreach.
- Check with child care centers and family child care providers to see if they are participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Let them know this program is offered by the Mississippi Department of Education.
- Volunteer at a local community kitchen or food pantry? These local sites are usually organized and run by church or civic organizations and rely on volunteers to prepare and serve meals and to secure, shelve and sack grocery items. Volunteers are always needed.
- Be a messenger. Talk with young parents about the importance of sound nutrition practices.

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All three KIDS COUNT Mississippi Data Books have been titled ***Deepest Spring in the Heart.*** Award winning Mississippi author Eudora Welty says she has always written of the family as the "deepest spring of the heart." Because children are truly our state's future, the KIDS COUNT Mississippi Data Books have featured childhood photographs of famous Mississippians—first writers, then playwrights and now musicians—and particular pieces of their art that have focused on children, family and life in Mississippi.

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